

**Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, DC 20554**

In the Matter of)
Implementation of Section 621(a)(1) of)
The Cable Communications Policy Act) **MB Docket No. 05-311**
Of 1984 as Amended by the Cable)
Television Consumer Protection and)
Competition Act of 1992)

**COMMENTS OF THE LEAGUE OF UNITED LATIN AMERICAN
CITIZENS OF THE NORTHEAST REGION**

I. INTRODUCTION

The League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) is the oldest and largest Latino civil rights organization in the United States. LULAC advances the economic condition, educational attainment, political influence, health, and civil rights of Hispanic Americans through community-based programs operating at more than 700 LULAC councils nationwide. LULAC is a member of the Consumers for Cable Choice (C4CC)¹ alliance of consumer organizations with members throughout the United States because of the impact that video choice will have on the Latino community.

FCC policy should encourage new entrants into the cable marketplace because as competition increases, so do opportunities for Latinos, expanded diversity programming, a more positive portrayal of Latinos and the contribution Latinos make to the nation, and new choices which result in lower prices for consumers.

II. DISCUSSION

Video choice offers Latinos enormous economic, social and creative opportunities. The more diverse programming made possible by cable competition will help foster these opportunities.

¹ Consumers for Cable Choice, Inc. is a not-for-profit corporation formed under Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code.

The current marketplace for video, without real competition, adversely impacts Latinos:

- According to the National Latino Media Council, there are 43 million Latinos in the U.S. and in Puerto Rico, with an estimated buying power of close to \$653 billion. Still, Latinos continue to be severely underrepresented.
- A 2001 study by Children Now (a nonprofit group) confirmed that Latinos are 13% of the population, but make up 2% of the roles on primetime TV. In back of the camera, the situation is even worse, in terms of writers, directors and producers.
- TV viewers have the tendency to consider television reality as actual reality. Since Latinos are, for the most part, underrepresented on television, this leads viewers to believe Latinos are not a large and significant part of the American population.
- Latinos are overrepresented as perpetrators of crime on TV, this leads viewers to see all Latinos as dangerous criminals. There is a lot at stake for the Latino community and our society.
- Studies have shown that children are more likely to identify with characters of their own racial/ethnic background. The under representation of Latinos in positive roles causes a shortage in positive role models for Latino children. They are left with negative images of Latinos, or none at all.
- Programming should reflect the increase in the minority population in the United States and it currently falls grossly short. This injustice needs to be addressed in our policies.
- White people's attitudes towards ethnic minorities are formed almost entirely by the media if they have no experience of living in a multi-cultural area.
- There should be more representation of Latinos. There's talent out there to play significant parts.
- Latinos are part of America and its history. Programming has a social and corporate responsibility to reflect the world as it is.

- It is imperative to have an increase of Hispanic-oriented programming in all facets of the media and in high-level decision-making positions at major media companies and networks.
- When policy considerations are made for regarding video choice, we must keep in mind policies that will benefit Hispanics in their mission to be represented accurately.

Increasing video choice will increase consumer choice in Latino communities, thereby increase diverse programming, accessibility and affordability to emerging technologies in the video marketplace. New economic opportunities for Hispanic producers, writers and actors, social benefits of more positive images of our community in the media and lower prices and better products for Latino consumers.

The FCC can and should set a national regulatory policy that provides a clear framework for the rapid and ubiquitous deployment of video choice, ensuring the benefits of competition in the video marketplace for the Latino community.

III. CONCLUSION

The changes in the economic system are being driven by technology and Hispanics need to benefit in all the facets. When Latinos see themselves in the media, and it's a positive representation, it has positive social impacts – it has a catalytic effect. Competition in markets leads to technology innovation, greater consumer choices and increased diversity programming. It leads to a more integrated America, this is goal.

The under representation of minorities in the media needs to be addressed both in the policy and business framework. The current video policy landscape presents a unique opportunity for increased diversity programming for our community. As the FCC proposes and debates ideas to address franchise reform, LULAC urges the Commission to consider the benefits of video competition to diversity programming.

LULAC and its members, support the acceleration of the expansion of video choice given its benefits to diversity in programming. Video Choice lends itself to increased consumer choice, thereby increasing diverse programming opportunities. It is imperative that as leaders we do all we can to ensure the inclusion of our community in programming in all its facets, in front and behind the cameras.

Respectfully submitted,

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